

Water Quality Advisory Group  
October 26, 2000  
Conference Room D

Minutes

Members present: Melanie Darke, John Wilkins, Bill Beranek, John Fekete and Tom Anderson.

Audience: John Elliott, Steve Roush, Pat Bennett, Tonya Galbraith, Dwight Daily, Eric Fry, Neil Parke, Bob Johnston, Rick Wajda, Alex daSilva, Catherine Hess, Barbara Scott and Mary Ellen Gray.

Introductions

Melanie: Internal discussions with DOC and IDEM. Looked at things from three different perspectives. Information collected should not be duplicative. Collect hard numbers then evaluate case-by-case. Reluctant to make criteria for 1, 2 and 3. Most Planning Commissions require permits beforehand. Throw this out for discussion today. We collect all kinds of statistics and numbers.

Bill: DOC deals with things that involve DOC?

Melanie: Yes.

Bill: Some projects there will be a direct overlap.

Melanie: Hesitant to say 'criteria' because that sets limits.

Bill: Someone will make these decisions. Important to have process open for outside people. What information do we need to evaluate? Is it good or bad? What is the process to determine good or bad? Matt suggested local officials making the decision.

Melanie: Need to evaluate case-by-case.

Bill: You are going to make the decisions whether a business should or should not come in to a community. Not sure this is a water quality decision.

Melanie: In the states evaluation, always consider local input.

John W.: This is a data gathering process.

Melanie: Offering this to everyone. We have a system in place regardless whether they require money from DOC.

Bill: Recalibrate for our process.

John W.: Any business would have positive economic impact.

John F.: Anyone who can't complete these forms wouldn't make it.

Melanie: Trying to supplement data that IDEM doesn't normally have.

Bill: Is it the roll of the government to make certain decisions?

Pat: Could say in this case there will be no negative impact.

John W.: Don't want this to be cart blanche for IDEM. You can improve a negative project.

John F.: Local input – Tonya.

Tonya: Company usually comes to local community first. Not every company gets approved. Decision making process before you get to zoning.

Bill: Land-use most efficient.

Melanie: Collectors of data. Will provide information to IDEM.

Barbara: In summary, do you capture local summary?

Melanie: Yes. We may not have money in every project, but we do have input.



John F.: Make recommendation to locals that this project go forward? Do you consider whether others would recommend this project to go forward?

Melanie: Yes.

Tonya: Some companies would have impact on water quality.

Melanie: Yes. Tom McKenna has agreed if we need to add additional staff to review economic data we will.

John F.: Currently a system in place – can we enhance this for our purposes?

Steve: Need to encompass social. There has to be both.

John F.: Capture all these elements and call them ‘guidelines’. Can they be quantifiable? May be policy decisions. Make list and see where they fit.

Melanie: Document guidelines – can make a more elaborate list of what we do with 1,2 and 3.

Tom: Where does the public fit into your process?

Melanie: Through local hearings. Will not give money if local community doesn’t want it.

Tom: No process at the state level?

Melanie: That’s correct.

John F.: Use information that already exists and not duplicate.

Mary Ellen: Melanie can give us information they collect and we can assemble.

John F.: Melanie can assemble a list of guidelines.

John W.: Is this list everything?

John F.: Looking at social/economic under antidegradation.

John W.: Nice to know the priorities as well. Are there state goals?

Melanie: There are goals but it depends upon what is going on at the local level.

John W.: What is the strategy to attract high-tech industry?

Melanie: Tech Fund – local communities promote high-tech industries in their community. We cannot force communities into high-tech. Guidance will have to be broad.

Bill: Should not have a state policy that cannot be implemented. What are the companies that would succeed or fail?

Steve: A lot of these may be easy to see they qualify. The more complicated the higher up the chain it will go.

John F.: Aren’t going to solve everything.

Bob: Look at new facility or expansion. I think what will come into IDEM most often will be the small incremental changes.

Melanie: How is company strengthening within the community is a factor.

Bill: Who gets rejected in this analysis?

Barbara: Must be positive impact.

Bill: Suggest a box with signature – this is a positive impact. Make it as simple as possible.

Tom: Necessary test does support widespread social and economic impacts. In Michigan the applicant provides social/economic impact information. In Michigan it is either/or.

Melanie: We have to decide what is important.

Pat: Federal definition addresses what is important to the state. Everything will be approved, nothing will fail. Why gather data if only to support federal guidelines? Will agency be making social/economic decisions?



Melanie: We have a system in place to acquire local input.

Bill: Do we want the water permit to hinge on local input and public participation?

Melanie: Who decides what is social/economic improvement? The current state policy states that is decided at the local level.

John F.: Capture these ideas. Discussion has been helpful.

Neil: Do you create the rules so everything goes through IDEM or create criteria to make it easier on IDEM?

John F.: Try to make recommendation to IDEM and help them do their job better.

Barbara: November 13<sup>th</sup> another technical group meeting. Should have presentation at next meeting.

John F.: Next WQAG meeting November 16<sup>th</sup>, Thursday, at 10:00 am. Water Data Task Force meeting in the afternoon. Canceling the 8<sup>th</sup> and moving it to the 16<sup>th</sup>. Next workgroup meeting is November 30<sup>th</sup> from 10 – 12.

Barbara: December 13<sup>th</sup>, 10 – 12.

John F.: Next meeting have presentation on exemptions/exceptions.

Barbara: No decisions on de minimus.

John F.: Put together companion piece to flow chart. Policy decisions – criteria. Next meeting continue this and put a wrap on it. Three stage presentation on exemptions/exceptions.

Mary Ellen: Where fit in de minimus and significant lowering?

John F.: Put off de minimus until we have guidance. Can discuss at the same time as exemptions/exceptions. Discussion – de minimus and significant lowering. Final comments?

Bill: What is the process of public participation and how? There will be disputes.

John F.: Category of things out there that may have an impact. How do we handle those?

Tom: Status of 11.7 rule? Approval?

Barbara: Effective October 30<sup>th</sup> I believe. Gone through state process but not to EPA. I think – I'll check.

Mary Ellen: People contact John for next meetings presentation.

Adjournment